

MR2561-153

Serial Number: 10/829,365

Reply to Office Action dated 19 September 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of Drawings includes changes to Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Fig. 1, replaces the original sheet including that Figure. In Fig. 1, the previously omitted Legend "PRIOR ART" has been added.

Attachment: Replacement sheet

REMARKS

At the outset, the courtesies extended by the Examiner in granting the 11 January 2006 interview, and the professionalism he demonstrated during that interview, are appreciatively noted. At the interview, the references cited by the Examiner in the 19 September 2005 Office Action were discussed in light of the clarifying amendments proposed to the Claims by the undersigned Attorney, as reflected herein.

The Examiner having indicated that the proposed amendments appear to overcome the prior art applied in the Office Action, such amendments are hereby incorporated. Additional amendments are concurrently incorporated hereby to further clarify the claimed invention. Accordingly, Claims 2-3, 11, and 20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, Claims 1, 4-10, and 12-19 have been amended, and Claims 21-22 have been newly-inserted for further prosecution with the other pending Claims.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Fig. 1 of the Drawings for the absence of the Legend "PRIOR ART." A formally corrected version of Fig. 1 including the previously omitted Legend is thus submitted herewith.

Also in the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Disclosure for containing inconsistent terminology in the designation for the reference character 300A. The paragraph of the Disclosure in question is now amended to remove the inconsistency.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. It is believed that the amendments now incorporated into the Claims obviate the Examiner's specifically noted formal concerns under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner further rejected Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by the Sugano reference. In doing so, the Examiner relied specifically upon Figs. 1-2 and paragraphs 0025-0066 of Sugano.

As newly-amended independent Claim 1 now more clearly recites, Applicants' hybrid system includes among its combination of features not only at least one electric power driving device and at least one fuel driving device, but also "an integrated power assistant device coupled to the fuel driving device." As the Claim further clarifies, in addition "to start[ing] the fuel driving device," and "generat[ing] power responsive to the fuel driving device working," this integrated power assistant device is "selectively operable ... to assistively and directly augment the driving power of the fuel driving device." A system-controlling device is provided to control such integrated power assistant device along with the other devices.

Newly amended independent Claim 1 also clearly recites in addition to the "at least automatic clutching device" disposed "between the fuel driving device and the first electric power driving device," a separate "electromagnetic clutch"

serving to properly actuate a continuously variable transmission. The continuously variable transmission system is thereby provided with “a reconfigurable pulley assembly operable responsive to an electromagnetic clutch coupled thereto,” as Claim 1 sets forth.

The full combination of these and other features now more clearly recited by Applicants’ pending Claims is nowhere disclosed by the cited reference. Note in this regard that while Sugano does disclose a continuously variable transmission unit for a hybrid vehicle, it nowhere provides separate means (other than the primary drive motor A) “to assistively and directly augment the driving power of the fuel driving device” as now more clearly recited by newly-amended independent Claim 1. Sugano does disclose a motor B 3 provided with the engine 2; however, this motor B 3 operates only “for power generation/engine start purpose[s],” as the reference itself explicitly notes (paragraph 0027). The reference explains quite clearly that the “motor B functions as a generator under a normal condition but functions as a starter when the vehicle is started,” (paragraph 0027).

Nowhere does Sugano even suggest that this motor B may also function otherwise, “to assistively and directly augment” the actual “driving power” of its engine, much less in “selectively operable” manner along with its other functions, as Claim 1 recites. To the contrary, Sugano’s precisely defined and detailed transmission configuration - with its highly defined arrangement and intercoupling

of components - weighs heavily against modifications entailing such pronounced deviation from its disclosures.

Sagano also fails to disclose any clutch mechanism other than the electromagnetic clutch 11 situated between the engine 2 and motor A 15 to provide the clutching function therefor. While Sagano does employ a variable transmission, it nowhere prescribes for a “reconfigurable pulley assembly operable responsive to an electromagnetic clutch coupled thereto,” in the manner recited now more clearly by Claim 1.

Nor does Sugano anywhere disclose such other features now more clearly recited by Applicants’ pending Claims as the “middle retardation shaft driven responsive to ... [a] rear pulley” of the continuously variable transmission device (see newly-inserted Claims 21 and 22). Sugano does disclose rack and pinion connections between its CVT components and differential unit 31, but does not provide for any retardation at that point.

It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that the Sugano reference fails to disclose the unique combination of these and other elements now more clearly recited by Applicants’ pending Claims for the purposes and objectives disclosed in the subject Patent Application. The other references cited by the Examiner but not used in the rejection are believed to be further remote from Applicants’ hybrid system when patentability considerations are taken properly into account.

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It is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed fully in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

For: ROSENBERG, KLEIN & LEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jun Y. Lee', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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